

Paṭiccasamuppāda - Buddhist Theory of Causal Genesis

- An analytical historical study

Bhikkhu Dhammavihari

We are of the opinion that from whichever angle a study of the concept of Paticcasamuppada [Skt. Pratītya-samutpāda] or theory of causal genesis in Buddhism is undertaken, its primary source of information should be the Mahanidana Sutta of the Digha Nikaya.

The Sutta opens with a discussion between the Buddha and venerable Ananda wherein both agree on the doctrinal profundity of this piece of Buddhist teaching: 'Profound indeed is the teaching of Paṭiccasamuppāda. Its impact on our thinking is equally profound ' [Acchariyaṃ bhante abbhutaṃ bhante yāva gambhīro cā' yaṃ bhante paṭicca-samuppādo gambhīrāvabhāso ca and Gambhīro cā ' yam ānanda paticca-samuppādo gambhīrāvabhāso ca. Both at D.11 55. Also at S.11. 92]. The Buddha further adds that the failure and inability to grasp fully its implications keeps people rolling on in samsāra with the possibility of degeneracy into lower states in the process [...apāyaṃ duggatiṃ vinipātaṃ saṃsāraṃ nātivattati. loc.cit. at D.& S]. Therefore it is not to be thought of lightly [Atha ca pana me uttānakuttānako viya khāyati ... Mā h'evaṃ ānanda avaca. loc.cit. at D. & S.].

Further to this, we discover in the Mahahatthipadopama Sutta [M.1. 190f.] a statement by venerable Sariputta in which he informs the monks of the Buddha's own assessment of the Paticcasamuppāda. The Buddha is said to equate it with the dhamma [Vuttaṃ kho pan ' etaṃ bhagavatā yo paṭiccasamuppādaṃ passati so dhammam passati yo dhammaṃ passati so paṭiccasamuppādam passaṃ' ti. loc.cit.]

Another basic observation which one has to make about the Paṭiccasamuppāda before proceeding any further is that the phrase idappaccaya or idappaccayatā [causal - genesis - relationship] is used strictly in association with the dependent origination sequence of the Paṭiccasamuppāda and that both these unmistakably refer to the saṃsāric continuance [paccayā] and release therefrom [nirodhā] of worldly beings [Atthi idappaccayā jarāmaṇaṇaṇ'ti iti puṭṭhena satā ānanda atthī ' ti ' ssa vacaṇīyaṃ. loc. cit.]. These two together are identified as the core teachings of Buddhism relating to man and his liberation [Alayaṛāmāya kho pana pajāya ... duddasaṃ idamaṃ ṭhānaṃ yadidaṃ idappaccayatā pṭiccasamuppādo. M.1. 167. Also at S.1. 136].

Wherever the abstract formula of causal genesis ' that being there, this arises ' [imasmim sati idam hoti] is used in Buddhist texts, we invariably discover that it is being used only in relation to the genesis of saṃsāric beings [Iti kho bhikkhave tumhe ' pi evaṃ vadetha. Aham ' pi evaṃ vadāmi iti imasmim sati idam hoti imass ' uppādā idamaṃ uppajjati yadidaṃ avijjā-paccayā saṅkhārā saṅkhāra-paccayā viññāṇaṃ ... M.1. 262-3. Also at S.11.95].

In the Mahahathhipadopama Sutta quoted above, Sariputta adds his own observation about what he considers to be paṭiccasamuppāna dhammā. He firmly says that they are none other than the ' five aggregates of grasping ' [Paṭicca-samuppānaṃ kho paṇ ' ime yadidaṃ pañc ' upādānakkhandhā. M.1. 191. These refer to none other than sentient beings of the category of humans.]. These clearly indicate that the causal - genesis - relationship implied in the words paṭicca-samuppānaṃ dhammā relates specifically only to saṃsāric journeying of worldly beings. [We are inclined to add that perhaps their relevance is only at the human level.]. We find the concept of paṭiccasamuppāna being very meaningfully used in the Mahatanhasankhaya Sutta [M.1. 256-7] to explain to Sati the causal - genesis - structure of viññāṇa. We fail to see the applicability of the concept of Paṭiccasamuppāda elsewhere to insentient things of the world. The Buddha apparently had very little need to go into such areas.

Not only does the Mahanidana Sutta vibrantly begin with the vital idea of the much-dreaded prolongation of samsāra or cycle of births and deaths [often referred to as saṃsāroghā mahabbhayā] owing to the ignorance of paṭicca-samuppāda [... etassa dhammassa ananubodhā ... saṃsāraṃ nātivattati. D.11.55], but it also launches its idea of causal - genesis - relationship with the twin question Is there a causal genesis for decay and death? and its compliment [in response to the answer Yes. There is.], What then is the cause of decay and death? There comes forth the simple but straightforward answer On account of birth there comes about decay and death. This line of argument must present to anyone very clearly the dimensions of the basic concept of life which the Buddha held, namely that it stretches through time and space. That it is time wise infinitely stretching [anamataḅḅā ' āyaḅḅā bhikkhave saṃsāro] and that plane wise, it can ascend and descend from the human to higher [su-gati] and lower [du-ggati] grades as in the idea of pañca gatayo [M.1.73]

Thus we see that the early Buddhist, as reflected in the Mahanidana Sutta, saw life with its ramifications or dukkha and the possibility of redemption therefrom or nirodha as spanning through saṃsāra. The more vital consideration was its saṃsāric dimension. Thus any scheme of soteriology in Buddhism had to bring within its vision an analysis of the entire range of life, not only from birth to death but also from recurrent birth again [... mīyati ca cavati ca uppajjati ca. S.11.5 & 104] to the repetition of this ceaselessly tangled process [... evaḅḅāyaḅḅā pajā tantākulaka-jātā gulā-guṅṅhika-jātā muṅṅja-babbaja-bhūtā apāyaḅḅā duggatiḅḅā vinipātāḅḅā saṃsāraḅḅā nātivattati. D.11.55]. This total and fundamental vision is and has to be what we call the Paṭiccasamuppāda. Or put it differently, Paṭiccasamuppāda undeniably does and has to embrace this total vision [And perhaps nothing less.]

Coming down to the reality of a living being in a single life time, framed conveniently within birth and death, we are compelled to select any single frame of that cinematographic film reel we referred to above and study its

phenomenology as a single link in the total chain, but certainly linked to the whole at both ends as when it refers to viññāṇa-sota and samvattanika- viññāṇa [See D.111. 105 as purisassa ca viññāṇa-sotaṃ pajānati ubhayato abhocchinnaṃ idha-loke patiṭṭhitaṃ ca para-loke patiṭṭhitaṃ ca. See also M.11. 262 ff where it refers to the ' rolling-on-from-life-to-life ' viññāṇa as samvattanika].

In the single frame of living reality which we select for further examination, we see before us a being with a physical form and with a total capacity to communicate with the world in the midst of which a human is placed, i.e. he sees, hears etc. and he responds to stimuli which are received through his sense organs. Such a being is referred to in Buddhist terminology as a satta. A satta is said to consist of khandhas, a word hitherto translated as aggregates. The aggregates are five in number, covering both the physical and the psychic and the totality is referred to as the Pañcakkhandha or Five Aggregates. The Pañcakkhandha embraces the totality of a living being,, explaining the very process of his living, its basis and its activity. This, of course, is a very down-to-earth explanation of life, as to who a being is, with nothing metaphysical about it. For the time being, let us take leave of the Paticca-samuppāda view of life in its samsaric dimension. Let us view the phenomenalism of our present life.

In response to a totally misdirected question from Mara, the Evil One [representative of current and contemporary erratic thinking of the time], as to the genesis and continuance of a being --

By whom is the being created? Who is the creator of this being?

Wherein did this being have his origin? Wherein will his cessation be?

Kenā ' yaṃ pakato satto kuvaṃ sattassa kāraṇaṃ
kuvaṃ satto samuppanno kuvaṃ satto nirujjhatī ' ti. S.1.135

Bhikkhuni Vajira replies, convincingly projecting the Buddhist point of view, that What you conceive of as a being, O Mara, Is only a viewpoint [diṭṭhi - gatam]

of yours. This is no more than an assemblage of conditioning factors. No being in reality does here exist. As an assemblage of components goes to make a chariot, So does an assembly of aggregates [khandhas] Makes this conventional being [satto]. [Trs. by the Author]

Kinnu satto ' ti paccesi māra diṭṭhigataṃ nu te Suddha-saṅkhāra-puñjo ' yaṃ nayidha sattūpalabbhati. Yathā hi aṅga-sambhārā hoti saddo ratho iti Evaṃ khandhesu santesu hoti satto ' ti sammuti. Ibid.

Thus one has to see the genesis of the Buddhist Pañcakkhandha theory as an honest down-to-earth explanation of the functioning of a living human being as we see him in our midst, no more no less. The Pañcakkhandha theory as an explanation of the phenomenon of being, apparently does not feel the need to push the present human life to an unseen past or project it to an unknown future. Everybody would have known that it is adequately dealt with in its multi-dimensional way in the Paṭicca-samuppāda theory. It is also equally true that no true student of Buddhism could have missed the saṃsāric implications of terms like saṅkhāra and viññāṇa which claim legitimate places in both listings.

While it is admitted that the focus of these two theories is distinctly different, one also feels the need to make use of quite a number of categories of the more detailed Paticca-samuppāda theory [especially in its psycho-ethical areas like taṇhā and upādāna], to explain the operation of the more abridged and abbreviated presentation of the Pañcakkhandha theory. [One might legitimately ask the relationship in which saññā stands to saṅkhāra in the Pañcakkhandha theory.].

The Pañcakkhandha theory in its fivefold categories makes a very concise and precise division of the psycho-physical constitution of the human entity. Rūpa holds the floor as it were on its own, presenting the visible and more tangible aspect of human life. It provides the physical basis, with its fivefold external sense organs [as well as the mind or mano as the sixth from within], for

sensory receptivity. The remaining four, namely vedanā, saññā, saṅkhāra and viññāṇa, in their totality represent the psychic component of man, evidently projecting, in the saṃsāric implication of concepts like saṅkhāra and viññāṇa, something more than the mere functioning of the present life, [linking up with yet another to come].

Of these four, vedanā and saññā as the first two seem to handle the early stages sensory-data-processing. We would take vedanā in this context as perception or basic and / or preliminary sensory awareness. This is exactly how the Mahanidana Sutta [D.11.58] explains vedanā, including even the sixth sense of mano or mind [seyyathīdam cakkhu-samphassajā vedanā... mano-samphassajā vedanā. Sabbaso vedanāya asati vedanā nirodhā api nu kho taṇhā paññāyethā ' ti. No h ' etaṃ bhante ' ti. loc. cit.]. In the above somewhat abbreviated listing of the links [op. cit. 56 ff.] where saññā is left out, vedanā appears to include within it even the role of saññā. [i.e. total apperceptive recognition of sensory data.] In saññā of the Pañcakkhandha listing, we would see a further stage beyond vedanā of distinct recognition and identification and would prefer to translate the term as apperception. Viññāṇa, in some aspects of its total character [like viññāṇa-bhāga at M.1.190 for each separate sense organ] is involved in making cognitive [and apperceptive] processes of the human mind adequately meaningful.

From this point of apperception [or saññā] onwards, it is our belief that the personalized major content of viññāṇa as life-carrier or the saṃvattanika-viññāṇa [as opposed to viññāṇa-bhāga] contributes to a further process of saṃsāra-building-constructs called saṅkhāra which are piled upon, as it were, on viññāṇa. It is our opinion that saṅkhāra primarily means these. In this sense, saṅkhāra has to precede the 'life-carrier' or saṃvattanika-viññāṇa. Hence saṅkhāra-paccayā viññāṇaṃ sequence in the Paṭicca-samuppāda chain. But the saṃsāra building aspect of saṅkhāra must be seen operating only after cognitive consciousness or viññāṇa-bhāga of any one of sense organs has come into play and set in motion

our reactions by way of upādāna.

With this attempted explanation of saṅkhāra and viññāṇa [in this sequence of viññāṇa following saṅkhāra] in the Pañcakkhandha theory, we feel that viññāṇa as the fifth khandha requires closer scrutiny. In terms of a saṃsāric being, we would say viññāṇa is both the builder and the built. Religio-philosophically speaking, in the Pañcakkhandha theory viññāṇa seems to be the one item which links a being between two lives. In our concept of saṅkhāra - loaded - viññāṇa of a living being even in the Pañcakkhandha theory, we believe we find some support for the Buddha's clarification of the concept of a being in answer to a mischievous and misleading Mara.

Rūpaṃ vedayitaṃ saññāṃ viññāṇaṃ yañca saṅkhataṃ N ' eso ' haṃ asmi n ' etam me evaṃ tattha virajjati. Evaṃ virattaṃ khemattaṃ sabba-saṃyojanātigāṃ Anvesaṃ sabba-ṭhānesu Māra-senā ' pi nājjhagā ' ti. S. 1.p. 112

Physical form, sensory awareness and apperceptive knowledge, Together with Consciousness and what's built upon it. One recoils from viewing all these as I or mine. One who is thus detached and securely sped beyond fetters, Hosts of Mara, in their search, shall nowhere find. [Trs. by the author]

The first line in the Pali verse above enumerates all the five items of the Pañcakkhandha. However, viññāṇaṃ and saṅkhataṃ [= saṅkhāra] have changed places in their sequence, saṅkhataṃ coming last. This, in one sense, is the product of viññāṇic activity as a single facet and in the other, it is the finally processed total viññāṇa itself. Further, the past participial form saṅkhataṃ as against the regular substantival form saṅkhāra gives it the impression and stature of a processed and stacked up thing. This, we believe, refers to the saṃsara - building- constructs or saṅkhāra which a being continues generating and loading on to his viññāṇa during his life process. We see this as the clearly enunciated saṃsāric process of the Paṭiccasamuppāda which runs as: Avijjā paccayā saṅkhārā saṅkhāra-paccayā viññāṇaṃ viññāṇa-paccayā nāma-rūpaṃ etc. That

process, in our opinion, is none other than viññāṇa as the life-carrier, taking across the karmic load of saṅkhāra for the genesis of a new life or new being through the medium of a parentally gifted nāma- rūpa. This is the thesis which the Mahanidana Sutta presents with perfect clarity and commendable precision. This is also the argument at S.11.13 where it is equally clearly stated that 'Viññāṇa as the feeder [viññāṇāhāro] is the condition which provides for the genesis of a birth in a new life [Viññāṇāhāro āyatim punabbhavābhiniḅbatiyā paccayo. loc. cit.].

We have already observed at the very outset that the Mahanidana Sutta opens with an avowed discussion on the Paṭiccasamuppāda between the Buddha and venerable Ananda. Two concepts are immediately introduced that 1. life of beings have a saṃsāric dimension and that 2. what happens through this process is far from being satisfactory. The latter pins down all this unsatisfactoriness of jarā and maraṇa on the fact of being born [Atthi idappaccayā jāti ' ti.] From the Sutta's line of explanation and interpretation here, we note that jāti is explained unmistakably as birth in any particular state of existence as human, divine, or animal as is known to be possible according to Buddhist thinking [pañca gatayo].

Following it backwards in its logical sequence of causal genesis or atthi idappaccayā, we are directed to recognize that such birth in any known form of existence [jāti certainly not being the cellular regeneration of our physical body during a single life time] is due to our inheritance of forces-of-birth which is precisely worded here as bhava. This immediately indicates, without any need for confusion, the necessity to trace the conditions of our present life genealogically [atthi idappaccayā] backwards into a life before this. All items traced in this backward search like bhava, upādāna, taṇhā etc. are nothing but the psychic forces like craving, grasping and holding on to, generated in one's living process. The total number of separate conditions which are brought under discussion here are only nine in number [as against twelve elsewhere].

They run backwards as follows. 1. jarā-maraṇa [decay and death], 2. jāti [birth], 3. bhava [potential for re-existence in a life beyond this], 4. upādāna [grasping], 5. taṇhā [craving], 6. vedanā [sensory awareness], 7. phassa [sensory impingement], 8. nāma-rūpa [psycho-physical or name-and-form constituent of life], 9. viññāṇa [birth-to-birth linking or life-carrier Consciousness]. With the Sutta's precise interpretation of terms like jāti and bhava in this context, we feel that even this abridged list of Paṭiccasamuppāda [with only nine life-generating conditions] provides enough basis for us to think of our present life here as being linked with a supporting thrust we got from the past [viññāṇa-paccayā nāma-rupaṃ], and that the present life in turn projects yet another into the future [upādāna-paccayā-bhavo bhava-paccayā jāti]. If we fail to understand the Pali here precisely, as most students often appear to do, we would be lamentably lost in the wilderness.

We also find the theory or principle of Paṭiccasamuppāda being presented with the help of a larger listing. This twelve-item list has three more items, namely avijjā, saṅkhāra and saḷāyatana added to it. The inclusion of avijjā points, more or less, in the direction of a search for a remote or primary beginning of the saṃsāric process of a being. But for any school of thinkers who uphold a theory of saṃsāra as against one of creation, this seems a legitimate search. To the Buddhists who also reject the idea of a creation, with their ideas of infinite life continuity forward and backwards, this search is even more legitimate. Therefore they place avijjā which is ignorance or lack of adequate knowledge as a convenient starting point in the life process of a being and reckon from there onwards the accumulation or build up of the life-generating forces of saṅkhāra. Therefore this list of twelve links adds these two items of avijjā and saṅkhāra at the very beginning of the forward moving list which goes on the basis of 'on account of the former, the latter', paccayā ... paccayā [avijjā paccayā saṅkhārā saṅkhāra paccayā viññāṇaṃ...].

The first addition of these two items at the head of the list seems to satisfy a

philosophical curiosity, a curiosity to know the present [of a sentient living being, i.e. saviññāṇaka and samanaka who is in our midst] in relation to a less known past. The Bodhisatta himself is said to have put this question repeatedly: Kimhi nu kho sati idaṃ hoti kiṃ paccayā jarā-maraṇan ' ti. [S.11.5ff., 10]. In this search, he is seen ultimately arriving at avijjā or 'lack of correct knowledge' lying at the very beginning of this recurrent saṃsāric process. This also explains the genesis of viññāṇa [i.e. life-generating consciousness] at the biological beginning of life [gabbhassa avakkanti]. This is precisely what the Mahanidana Sutta endeavours to explain and establish regarding the viññāṇa 's fertilization [perhaps at a second and more meaningful stage]of the embryo in the mother's womb, after its implant [D.11.63]. Here we are compelled to observe in passing that Rhys Davids, in his translation of this sutta has failed to comprehend the full connotation of the term viññāṇa here. He translates it as cognition: ' I have said that cognition is the cause of name-and-form.' [Dialogues of the Buddha Part 11.p. 60]. We have already indicated above that it has by now become the life-generating consciousness.

The third and last item added is saḷāyatana [six sense organs]. This details out the visible manifestation and growth of the five external sense organs [and the appearance of the sixth internal sense faculty mano] out of the foetal body of the unborn babe in the mother's womb. One could consider this to be no more than the addition of a detail [regarding an invariable occurrence]. One could also, on the other hand, justifiably refer to its absence in the original list as an omission of a vital stage of growth of the embryo. Between the mere fleshy body of nāma-rūpa and the sensory impingement of phassa, the growth of sense organs or saḷāyatana perhaps needed to be spelled out specifically. Thus we come to possess this full list of twelve items.

In the presentation of this twelve-linked Paṭicca-samuppāda distributed throughout the Buddhist texts, we find most striking the Nalakalapiya Sutta of the Samyutta Nikaya [S.11.112 ff.] in which the venerable Sariputta explains to the

venerable Maha Kotthita the inter-relatedness of the entire saṃsāric process of life, unfolding before us both the physical and the psychical processes involved in it. There is no denying that Maha Kotthita's first question to Sariputta starts with the known and visibly seen factor of decay and death [jarā-maraṇa] to which man is subject. Sariputta's clear and straightforward answer is that it is the fact of being born [jāti] into this state of existence. We have already shown that as far as jāti is concerned there is no mincing of words here. It is just the act of being born as human or animal. Be honest and have some respect for the Buddha word and read the following carefully: ... tesam tesam va hi ānanda sattānaṃ tathattāya jāti nābhavissa sabbaso jātiyā asati jāti-nirodhā api nu kho jaramaraṇaṃ paññāyethā ' ti. No h ' etaṃ bhante [D.11.57].

It needs no commentary here to clarify that the present lot of decay and death of man is invariably the product of his being born into this life. Thus in the very first question and answer of Maha Kotthita and Sariputta, handling it in the causally connected [ida-ppacayatā] way of Paṭicca-samuppāda, the concept of two existences is already established. Having come here [i.e. having taken up jāti in this existence], one has to face up to decay and death. But what about the coming here?

Backing up this process of birth into a new life here are bhava < and upādāna < in a cluster which have invariably been gathered in a state of former existence. As the very propelling force, they have to precede birth or jāti into this life. They are the outcome of taṇhā < and vedanā < of that [previous] life duration. They in turn are linked up with the more physical factors of phassa < and saḷāyatna < which primarily trigger off the psychic process of saṃsāra - building. All these have to be finally housed in a psycho-physical being of flesh and blood. This is the ultimately reducible unit of name and form or nāma-rūpa + viññāṇa in any phase of existence in saṃsāra. In the twelve-fold chain, while all items follow from the former to the latter, these two alone are mutually inter-dependent and reciprocally operating. Hence the title of this chapter Nalakaḷapa

or two bundles of reed which mutually lean on each other, supporting each other. Without the one, the other cannot stand. In the composition of a human entity, so are name [viññāṇa] and form [nāma-rūpa]. Mind and matter, in the constitution of a being, are never apart. They co-exist [...ettāvatā vaṭṭaṃ vaṭṭati itthattam paññāpanāya yadidaṃ nāma-rūpaṃ saha viññāṇena. D.11.63f.] Their [concurrent] cessation takes place finally only in nibbāna [Ettha nāmañ ca rūpañ ca asesam uparujjhati Viññāṇassa nirodhena etth ' etaṃ uparujjhati. D.1. 223].

As our next interesting presentation of this twelve-link Paṭicca-samuppāda we would refer the reader to the Buddha Vagga of the Nidana Samyutta [S.11. 5-11]. In a chapter entitled Mahā Sakyamuni Gotama, the historical Buddha Gotama, as Bodhisatta, is presented as coming to grips with the problems of saṃsāric existence like birth, decay and death in one life and their repetition in lives thereafter. In his penetrative questioning as to the origin of these and their possible eradication [nissaraṇa = escape therefrom], he discovers that birth [jāti] in any state of existence sets this process in motion and that the ultimate cause of all these traceable back to the ignorance[avijjā or ajānana] of the reality of life [yathā-bhucca or yathā-bhūta-ñāna].

It is clear from this, without any trace of doubt, that the theme of the Paṭicca-samuppāda pertains to the whole saṃsāric life and not to one single phase of existence. Thus its totality spreads unmistakably through time as past, present and future and also through space, across planes of existence both above and below the known world of humans.

Here it must be remembered that this does not necessarily imply that salvation of man, i. e. his liberation from this painful cycle of existence must necessarily stretch beyond this present life into a future one. It is never a liberation after death as in videha-mukta. Canonical texts never imply anything like that. It can be here and now. Ditth ' eva dhamme aññā [M.1.63] or enlightenment in this very life is a reality with them. It is the failure to do it here [sati uttariṃ karaṇīye] that gets one into one more birth or anāgāmitā [loc. cit.].

In the customary tradition of our Buddhist legends, the Samyutta Nikaya ascribes this same episode of Sakyamuni Gotama to the six previous Buddhas, from Vipassi to Kassapa [S.11. 5-9].

It is also interesting to discover our Buddhist texts integrating this twelve-link Paṭicca-samuppāda in their explanation of other major points of Buddhist teachings. Anguttara Nikaya Maha Vagga [A.1. 177] uses this in its evolutionary aspect of paccayā .. paccayā to explain the genesis of dukkha or dukkha-samudayaṃ [Katamañ ca bhikkhave dukkha-samudayaṃ ariya-saccaṃ? Avijjā-paccayā sañkhārā ... jāti-paccayā jarā-maraṇaṃ. Idaṃ vuccati bhikkhave dukkha-samudayaṃ ariya-saccaṃ. loc.cit.] In the same way, in its reverse order as nirodhā ... nirodho this same series is used to define the cessation of dukkha or dukkha-nirodha [Katamañ ca bhikkhave dukkha-nirodham ariya-saccaṃ? Avijjāya tv ' eva asesavirāga-nirodhā sañkhāra-nirodho.... Evaṃ etassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandhassa nirodho hoti. Idaṃ vuccati bhikkhave dukkha-nirodham ariya-saccaṃ.].

Another presentation of the teaching of the Paṭicca-samuppāda as a very vital item of the dhamma is where it is listed as Ariyo ñāyo [= highest knowing], a correct grasp of which through wisdom [paññāya sudiṭṭho hoti suppaṭividdho] constitutes a pre-requisite for the attainment of the state of sotāpatti [i.e. entry into the Buddhist scheme of salvation] . Therefore it is called a sotāpatti aṅga [A.V. 182 ff.]. Here the totality of sotāpatti pre-requisites consist of 1. complete guarding of the five precepts of morality [pañca-sīla or pañca-sikkhāpada], 2. unwavering total dedication to the tisaraṇa, 3. strict and precise adherence to the ariyakanta sīla and 4. gaining a complete mastery over the ariya ñāya of the Paṭicca-samuppāda. This idea of ariya ñāya or highest and supreme knowledge being identified as the knowledge of the causal genesis or imasmiṃ sati idam hoti imass ' uppādā idam uppajjati in relation to our Paṭicca-samuppāda of Avijjā paccayā sañkhārā ... and none other, bestows on Paṭicca-samuppāda its highest doctrinal value.